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*Histoire du Peuple Anglais au XIX<sup>e</sup> Siècle.* By ÉLIE HALÉVY, Professeur à l'École Libre des Sciences Politiques. Tome I. *L'Angleterre en 1815.* (Paris: Hachette et Cie. 1912. Pp. viii, 620.)

THIS volume is the first of four projected by M. Halévy as a history of the English people in the nineteenth century. The undertaking is monumental. It deserves notice because M. Halévy is one of the first writers to essay a definitive synthesis of the monograph material for the period. But, to judge from this first installment, his interpretation will disregard traditional views and offer suggestions that are quite new. Already, in this introductory volume, dealing with English society at the close of the Napoleonic struggle, he advances a theory the originality of which is apparent. He is trying to determine why England, in contrast to the Continental states of Europe, has enjoyed throughout the nineteenth century a public opinion that invariably maintains itself within conservative and non-revolutionary limits. The question draws from M. Halévy an exhaustive review of the institutional side of English life—this being the substance of the first volume.

The commonplace view that English political institutions make for stability he rejects entirely: in the sphere of economics he sees in distribution, based upon contract, only a provocation to anarchy; whilst towards the Established Church he betrays the prejudice of the philosophical radicals. How then, if not through these, is the non-revolutionary character of English society in the nineteenth century to be explained? M. Halévy answers: by religious nonconformity—nonconformity evincing itself subjectively in the mental attitude induced by evangelicalism, and objectively in the institution of Dissent, or the freedom of religious association.

The view is novel; in fact, almost startling. Admit it, and we shall be obliged to rewrite one of the more important chapters of English history. Probably many critics will disregard the theory entirely, especially those for whom the canon of the nineteenth century is already determined. Others may dispute the theory, and perhaps reject it on the reasoning that M. Halévy offers; for, with every wish to do justice to the originality that M. Halévy displays, it is impossible to absolve him altogether from the charge of logical incompleteness. The theory would seem to have come from a brilliant stroke of divination; but it has not been subjected to the usual tests of verification. M. Halévy leaves his readers with the impression that he is attributing much too definite a causal relation to phenomena for which the most that can be alleged at present is an accidental association. This is not to say that M. Halévy has placed Dissent and its social influence in a wrong light. He has thrown out a suggestion which fair-minded critics must give due consideration; but a suggestion which requires wider discussion and a somewhat different approach.

There is noticeable throughout this volume a tendency to lack of pre-

cision, frequently verging upon incorrectness; also a decided inclination to reason *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. The tone taken toward the family of George III. is not happy: though this is perhaps pardonable, as there are few topics that require such discriminating treatment. Equally unfortunate is the tone toward the Established Church, both in sarcasm and in an implication of sleepy officialism. In the chapters on Dissent there is much to which exception might be taken, much also that might be added by way of supplement. Thus, a study of the sectional distribution of Dissent, based upon the Parliamentary returns of Dissenters' places of worship—to which M. Halévy does not allude—would have modified one or two conclusions. Nevertheless, this introductory volume has brought into the discussion of recent English history a new question, and one which it is much to the credit of M. Halévy to have proposed.

C. E. FRYER.

*Jules Favre, 1809–1880.* Essai de Biographie Historique et Morale d'après des Documents inédits. By MAURICE RECLUS, Docteur ès Lettres. (Paris: Hachette et Cie. 1912. Pp. ix, 572.)

*Ernest Picard, 1821–1877.* Essai de Contribution à l'Histoire du Parti Républicain d'après des Documents inédits. By MAURICE RECLUS, Docteur ès Lettres. (Paris: Hachette et Cie. 1912. Pp. viii, 362.)

THE author of these biographies is a young scholar, who, from family tradition and personal sympathy, is deeply interested in the history of the republican party in France during the nineteenth century. The form which his contribution to that history has taken is due to his belief that while the origin and evolution of its doctrines, its organization and influence, its struggles and conquests, have been investigated in numerous excellent studies, its personnel has been neglected. Satisfactory lives of its leading journalists, orators, and statesmen are almost entirely lacking. That deficiency he has sought to supply for two of its most important and representative leaders.

M. Reclus recognizes that complete impartiality in regard to Favre and Picard is scarcely possible even for the younger generation of Frenchmen. The events in which they were prominent figures and the parts which they played still give rise very frequently to bitter polemics. From such influences he has striven to emancipate himself as far as possible by seeking to carry on his work in a scientific spirit and by taking great pains to avoid the attitude of either invective or apology. Any bias which his work may exhibit is due, he thinks, to sympathy for the cause which Favre and Picard championed rather than to partiality for the men themselves. He is especially solicitous that his life of Favre shall not be set down as a work of *réhabilitation*.

Both books are in general sound, interesting, and valuable studies,